

on a global feat!

CAPT. A. K. Singh, who lost his left leg in a hang-gliding accident over a year ago, is back in action. He has returned to Bombay for a while, after a 7,700 nautical mile journey in a 37 ft by 11 ft, 10.5 tonnes yacht christened *Trishna*, as a member of the Army team which is attempting a circumnavigation of the globe.

Singh, a gold-medallist at the National Defence Academy and winner of the Sword of Honour at the Indian Military Academy, had a glorious career awaiting him in the armed forces. A lover of adventure, he was the silver-medallist in the Windglider in the national yachting championship and a hang glider of repute. He had sailed to Goa, to Cochin and to Iran planning ultimately to sail around the world.

All this before the tragic accident at Pune when a sudden change in windshift felled him soon after take-off. He broke his jaw, his arms and his legs in half-a-dozen places. At the operation theatre gangrene set in and Singh joined the world of the handicapped, his career in the Army stumped.

But the will to survive remained predominant. Singh recouped in days. In a month he was driving and passed every possible fitness test. There was no way of dropping him from the original plan conceived by the Sapper Adventure Foundation.

July last year saw him leave with Col. T.P.S. Chowdhury to choose the right yacht. They settled for a second-hand, fibre-glass one, built by the world famous Nautor of Finland. "We looked for the sea worthiness of the yacht rather than comfort" admitted Singh later.

Having met with his wife and two children, Singh is getting set for September when the team embark on the 32,000 nautical mile round-the-world cruise. He is also making a bid to enter the disabled Olympics and set a few records.

It is not often that one sets off in a small boat to take on the vainglorious seas. The only other attempt that comes to mind is that of Gulshan and Ujjwala Rai, both non-swimmers, whose bravado and determination led to a repeat performance of a daredevil feat.

And in the same genre of incredible people to whom one must doff one's hat is Major H.P.S. Ahluwalia, the great mountaineer who refuses to give up despite being paralysed by a sniper's bullet in the '65 campaign.

All indicating, whatever said and done, that mind will prevail over matter. And as long as that holds true the world will have more heroes to applaud.